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STAT



Safety Talk and Tips

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Hurry Up Can Hurt

Let's slow down and review some safe working practices:

- ♦ Use protective gear when necessary
- ♦ Take extra steps needed to do the job properly
- ♦ Always use the correct tool for the job
- ♦ Follow lockout/tagout procedures
- ♦ Keep worksite tidy
- ♦ Return tools to their proper place
- ♦ Use proper lifting techniques
- ♦ Be alert to ways in which the workplace can be safer

Source: Texas Workers' Compensation Commission

Handle With Care!

By Darin Figurskey—MIC RAH

We have all seen, at some point, a package arrive with a sign on it stating, "HANDLE WITH CARE!" With a sign on a package like that, something fragile is typically inside the package. Normally, one treats the package carefully so the contents are not broken or spilled.

The slogan, "Handle With Care," can be extended to handling and moving furniture, office equipment, and tools, and even to moving, opening, and disposing or recycling of packages of all sizes. Throughout NOAA in the third quarter of FY05, materials handling and other, similar incidents resulted in 42% of all reported injuries across the organization, higher than any other category. In the NWS through May 2005, materials handling was the second leading cause of workplace safety incidents at 27.9%, behind only slips, trips, and falls.

Slowing down is one way, possibly the biggest way, to avoid materials handling safety incidents. Such things as quickly opening or tearing a box (cuts from sharp edges, large staples, or box cutter), hastily moving a large object (bumping hands, legs, feet), or being too fast and careless with a tool (cuts, scrapes, punctures over any portion of the body) can lead to trouble. Taking just a few extra seconds to think, observe, and act can make the difference between safe execution of a task and a trip to the first aid kit, the physician, or the hospital.

In addition to slowing down, here are more tips to consider in handling materials more safely:

- ♦ Keep aisles and passageways free from obstructions.
- ♦ Close cabinets and drawers when not in use, even for just a few moments.
- ♦ Stack boxes in straight columns with the largest on the bottom, making sure none protrudes into the walkway.
- ♦ Inspect the condition of tools before use, don't use if defective (splinters on wooden handle, missing guard, cracks, frayed power cords, mushroom head on impact tool) and use the proper personal protective equipment for the job.
- ♦ Look after your hands and legs when moving, handling, or picking up sharp and/or heavy objects.

Again, **think, observe**, and then **act** when handling materials. It's not just a fragile package that should be handled with care. Your body is fragile, too, so make sure everything you handle is done with safety in mind.



Material Handling And Your Back



Quick Tips For Lifting

- ⇒ Size up the load
- ⇒ Get as close to the load as possible before lifting
- ⇒ Keep the load as close to your body as possible
- ⇒ Make sure your footing is secure
- ⇒ Do not twist while lifting
- ⇒ Lift smoothly and slowly
- ⇒ Organize the work so as to avoid lifting from the floor or above shoulder level
- ⇒ Try not to lift everything at once, spread it out
- ⇒ Use the same principles when lowering or placing the load after lifting
- ⇒ Try to avoid carrying the load more than 10 feet without getting mechanical assistance

Source: Washington State Dept. of Labor and Industries



Lessons Learned - Avoiding Accidents When Using a High Speed Drill

Recently in the Eastern Region, an Electronics Technician (ET) was using a high speed drill on a piece of sheet metal. The ET was holding the sheet metal in his left hand and the drill in his right hand. He was wearing eye protection, but was not wearing gloves. As the drill bit went through the sheet metal, the drill bit grabbed, skipped to the side, and drilled through his finger. The doctor's findings: the patient punctured his left index finger lateral to the second middle phalanx bone; the drill bit punctured soft tissue to a depth of a half-inch; minimal blood loss; no stitches required; tetanus shot required.

The ET was embarrassed by the preventable accident. He knew better, but he was in a hurry. After all, it was only one hole that needed to be drilled. In this situation, in addition to wearing protective eyewear, the ET should have worn gloves, the piece of sheet metal should have been placed in a vise or secured with clamps. A drill guide could have been used if necessary. Lesson learned!

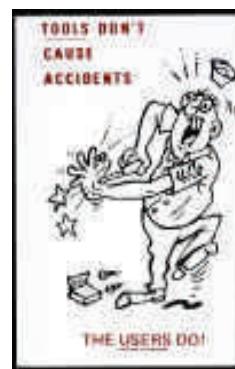
Ten Ways To Maintain A Healthy Back

1. Maintain a healthy weight
2. Strengthen the abdominal and back muscles
3. Lift items properly
4. Strengthen the leg muscles
5. Stay flexible
6. Maintain good posture
7. Buy a comfortable mattress
8. Reduce stress
9. Warm up before activity
10. Support the lower back when sitting

Source: Steven Publishing



Thought for all managers: To encourage safe work practices implement the following rule: "Employee work practices should not create a hazard."



Safety Rules For Working With High Speed Drills

- * Keep bystanders away when operating the power tool.
- * Avoid accidental starting; be sure the switch is off before starting.
- * Disconnect the plug before making adjustments or changing accessories.
- * Wear safety glasses.
- * Wear hearing protection during extended periods of operation.
- * Inspect tool cord periodically for damage or wear.
- * Remove damaged power tools from service and don't use them again until they are repaired.
- * Inspect and remove all nails from lumber before drilling.
- * Stay alert and watch what you are doing
- * Secure the work with clamps or a vise to keep your hands free.

Remember to practice safety. Don't learn by accident!

Source: Texas Workers' Compensation Commission

Safely Conducting Storm Surveys

By Dave Ondrejik, WCM
NWS State College, PA

It is important to practice safety when working both inside and **outside** the office. Awareness and sometimes just common sense is critical to avoiding accidents.

Conducting storm surveys are vital to understanding significant and rare weather events across the United States. There are **many** dangers, some hidden, associated with storm surveys. The purpose of this article is to raise awareness of some of the safety hazards while doing a storm survey.

Here are some basic items to consider before going on a storm survey:

- First, are you wearing the proper personal protective equipment (PPE) .
- Be aware of downed or leaning trees.
- Be wary of stray dogs and never approach an animal you don't know. Be mindful of the wildlife you may encounter such as snakes, bears, ticks, etc.
- NEVER enter a house that has been damaged by a storm. All office storm survey kits should include a hard hat!
- Watch for downed power lines.
- Be aware of the signs of heat stroke in you and people around you.
- Drink plenty of fluids and use sunscreen to prevent sunburn.
- Check your vehicles first aid kit before leaving.
- Make sure your office knows where you are going and if you are meeting with the Emergency Management Agency officials in the event they need to contact you. Be sure to take an office or personal cell phone.
- Finally, be aware of impending weather.

Each WFO will face unique safety issues when conducting storm surveys, so be aware of your local issues. Please check out the Power Point Presentation prepared by the staff at WFO CTP:

<http://www.werh.noaa.gov\SOD\ES&H\Power Point Training\StormSurveySafety.ppt>



Hazards Associated With Performing Storm Surveys

- ◆ **Scattered Debris**
- ◆ **Falling Limbs/Leaning Trees**
- ◆ **Buildings With Structural Damage**
- ◆ **Downed Power Lines**
- ◆ **Heat Stroke**
- ◆ **Excessive Exposure To The Sun**
- ◆ **Incoming Weather**
- ◆ **Poison Ivy**
- ◆ **Ticks**
- ◆ **Wildlife (snakes, bear, ticks, etc.)**
- ◆ **Stray Dogs**



REMEMBER, SAFETY FIRST!



About this Newsletter

This newsletter is brought to you on a quarterly basis by the Eastern Region Environmental Safety and Health Advisory Board to help increase awareness of the importance of the safety and health programs within the Department of Commerce, NOAA, and the National Weather Service. Your comments are welcome. Please send all comments to Kevin Murray.